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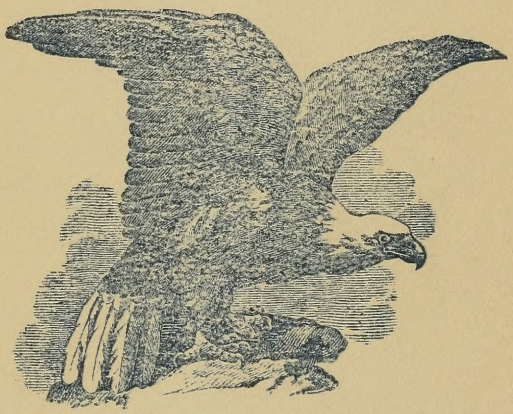
THE CAUSE



A BIT OF WAR-VERSE

BY

ADA BOYD GLASSIE

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THE AMERICAN MOTHER TO HER SON

Put by your sports, my son,—
  Foes menace our fair shore;
Do as your sires have done,—
  Prepare for war.

Mine are but petty needs,
  Mine but one single hearth—
Our Country's honor bleeds,
  And stains the earth.

When God gave you to me,
  I took no count of fate—
A man, I deemed, should be
  For labors great.

In this belief I wrought
  To make your strength complete,
Body and mind I taught
  Their Call to meet.

Would I have you bide here
  Beside my mother-knee,
Lest *I* should shed a tear?—
  It must not be.

Our Country's *best* you claim,
  The ideals with her grown,—
Law, freedom, a fair name—
  All are your own.

And you?—full well she knows
  Will give back worth for worth.
Go, for her life-blood flows
  And stains the earth.

TO BELGIUM

Out of the dust, Belgium, shalt thou arise;
Out of the dust of sorrow, not of shame;
Lifting thy spires again unto the skies,
Lifting again, thy fair, untarnished name.
Gathered around thee, shall the nations gaze
Upward—not downward, while their voices blend,
A re-united chorus, in thy praise,—
Thou, who no selfish weal from right could bend.
Stricken?—Yea, but not crushed. Hold then this true,
Peoples act only as their ideals are,
And time records them by the deeds they do,
And God in His justice reaches wide and far.
God in His justice?—Belgium, thou shalt stand
Forth from this wreck of war a greater land.

"THE HINDENBURG LINE"

(A Vision)

Why are we at war?
Mother, oh why?
Child, we have heard the wail
Of babes and sucklings hurled into the deep
From shattered ships;
Out of that murk ere dawn
Heard, too, the cry
Of mothers struggling, struggling yet to keep
Their human treasure from the sharks which yawn,
And gape, and throng beneath.
Out of the pitchy blackness words have sprung
From true men's lips
Such as no man should breathe,
As they and theirs, unwarned were flung
From shattered ships,
And headlong plunged into the sea,
Down, down, down, to be
The feast of slimy things.
This is the fearful tale,
And fills the soul with shudderings;
But, Mother, can't they cease
These barbarous deeds, so that no more
Nations need go to war?
Might we not live at peace?—
Mother, tell me true.
Child, it may not do;
For the world has heard
A prophetic word
From men who, dreaming, see
Things as they would have them be.
And this is what it means to you and me,—
Out of their land a Line goes forth;
It reaches South, and it reaches North;

Of iron rings with steel-wrought clamps,
It gouges, and it stamps,
Crushing the heart,
Heedless of blood, heedless of pain.
Through Belgium, Serbia, the Dardanelles,
It grinds and quells.
From North, from South, it drags and binds
All creeds and kinds.
Onward its black links run,
To the land of the rising sun;
Past, to the great, calm main;
Grinding the Pacific's floor,
Crushing onward more and more,
Reaching the New World's shore.
From South, from North, it drags and binds
All creeds and kinds.
Circling the mind, circling the soul,
Onward its black links roll;
With steel-wrought clamps,
It gouges and it stamps,
Crushing the heart,
Heedless of blood, heedless of pain;
Doing its part
To stifle and to slay
All that is fine, all that are free.
Onward again
It grinds to the sea.
Through the Atlantic it blackens along;
O'er the British Isles—home of the strong,
It harries its way;
From North, from South, it drags and binds
All creeds and kinds.
Surging the waves again
Back to the land whence it sprung,
Out of its mire and dung, —
Out of the Prussian Brain.
Mother, if such is the word
The world has heard

From those men who, dreaming see
Things as they would have them be,—
Their dream we must rend
From end to end
As a storm of the deep rends a sail.—
Their Iron Chain shall fail.
Though we must fight—and though we die,
O, Mother, what care we?—
If but the earth lives free?

"KULTUR"

Mother, what ails the earth?
Why do the great cathedrals crumble so?
Why do the people wander to and fro,
And weep, and starve, and die?
Mother, why, oh, why
Are there such meagre fields for men to till?
Why do the soldiers roam about at will,
And burn, and kill?
Where are the happy homes that used to be
A gladsome sight to see?
Why do the bayonets gleam on every street?
Why do the drums forever roll and beat?
I see no houses where our books were kept,—
Those eyes of knowledge that have never slept,
But keener grown,
Until they almost fathomed the Unknown.
I see no countenance alight with mirth;—
Mother, what ails the Earth?
It is The KULTUR, child, O pray
For God to save you while He may.

2

Mother, what ails the Sea?
Where are those ships that rode it swift and free?
Look, mother, what are they?
Those are not fish and porpoises at their play—
Ah no, those are dead babes. And yonder, too—
Why *they* were, maybe, mothers just like you.
O, is it true?
And closer into shore,
Still more, and more;
But these were brave, true men; see there! see there!

The weeds have almost grown on them like
hair!
Why is the Ocean filled with dead folk so?
There must be many vessels sunk below.
It is The KULTUR, child, O pray
For God to save you while He may.

3

Mother, what is that Thing
Hovering in the air,
With dir and awful wing?
Mother, where, oh! where
Is the warm, shining sun?
Can That be only clouds?—
What have the Heavens done
To brood in such black shrouds?
The Sea grows foul and drear,
The Earth begins to fade—
Hide me, O mother dear,
I am afraid! afraid!
It is The KULTUR, child, O pray
For God to save you while He may.

THE U-BOAT

Under the wave;
Long, low, and sinister,
Fuming it breathes,
Swiftly to minister
The death-dealing sting.
It is a Thing.
Gorged with dead humankind,
Reeking and murder-blind,
Onward it seethes.
Who on the Ocean knows
Whither or whence it goes,
Where it will strike?
What it is like?
Nothing that God ever made,
Scarce has the fiend essayed
Such tool to crave.
Under the wave,
Onward it seethes;
Long, low, and sinister
Fuming it breathes,
Swiftly to minister
The death-dealing sting.
It is Man's Thing.
Who on the Ocean dares
Offer it prayers?

SERVICE

What is it I hold for thee,
Land of my birth?—
Love?—Yea, but that love must be
Proved in my worth.

A year?—or a day?—who knows?
Perhaps an hour.
No matter, if it but shows
My worth's full pow'r.

What can I bear for thy sake?
What can I give?—
Must thou all my dear ones take,
And have me live?

Or, is it myself must be
Torn by war's shell?—
Blind, halt,—whatever to thee
May seemeth well.

O, Country of mine, I ask
What is thy will?—
I am ready!—let the task
My love fulfill.

—Ada Boyd Glassie.
Historian, Col. John Donelson Ch., D. A. R.

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